

WINCHESTER PARKING AUTHORITY

July 18, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dick Helm, Kim Burke & Howard Manheimer

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Miller

OTHERS PRESENT: Samantha Anderson, Teresa Couch, Katherine Herrmann, Jennifer Bell, Derek Gomes, Ginger Perry, Peter Buchbauer, J.D. Smith, Jodi Line, Melinda Smith, Gail Fritz, Kevin Ringwood, Tanya Snyder, Bill Stavrou, Juanita Powell, John Rounds, Tracy Drumheller, Julia Connell & Tommy Stine

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Helm called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. at which time it was determined a quorum was present.

II. INTRODUCTION

Chairman Helm introduced himself and welcomed the attendees to the meeting. Helm began by explaining that the Authority's reason for conducting this meeting was due to the result of circumstances the Authority faces pending the completion of garage renovations at its most frequently used garage; Braddock Autopark. Helm informed attendees of the following:

- Approximately ten years ago, the George Washington Autopark was released for bond issue by Council. It was Council's belief that the Authority should become a self-sufficient and self-sustaining entity.
- Two years ago, Council tasked the Authority to research how parking was managed globally. Council asked that the Authority explore options for improving its current operations and management.
- The Authority formed a global parking committee comprised of stakeholders that represented a cross section of parking needs. The committee was asked to focus on available parking needs and to evaluate how the Authority could maximize and improve upon its operations and management.

III. BRADDOCK RENOVATION UPDATE

Helm noted that Council allotted funds for the garage renovations as a capital maintenance project. Braddock Autopark will be closed for construction on August 4, 2014 and reopen tentatively on September 1, 2014. Monthly parkers will be relocated to the other three garages during the month of August.

IV. GLOBAL PARKING COMMITTEE – Focus group on capacity policy

Helm informed attendees that the Authority reviewed the parking committee's research and recommendations. Helm explained that there are many variations of garage operations and management procedures from which to choose. The Authority considered if any of the viable options provided by the committee for management and operations would be desirable to the customer while continuing to support WPA sustainability.

Helm informed attendees that the committee recommended the Authority convert its current operations of the garages over to capacity operations. Helm briefly explained that capacity operations allow for full utilization of spaces within garages. Software equipment determines how many spaces are needed for monthly parking and how many spaces are available for hourly parking per data input. Software would use this information to operate the garages efficiently by maintaining monthly parking availability while monitoring hourly parking use. When hourly parking has reached its capacity, the garage would close to hourly parking use only and lot full signs would alert the public that spaces are not available for parking. Monthly rental spaces would remain available for use.

Helm explained that the committee conducted a survey asking current monthly rental customers and the overall public its opinion on capacity operations. The results of the survey determined that a capacity operation was not attractive to customers. Helm stated that given the results of the survey, the Authority still needed to address growing issues with space availability and adequate management of the garages, especially for Braddock Auto park which is increasingly in high demand for parking.

V. PROPOSED HYBRID SYSTEM DISCUSSION

Helm stated that after the Authority reviewed customer concerns expressed in the survey the Authority decided to develop what would be called a hybrid system of parking options in an attempt to accommodate customer's various parking needs. The hybrid system would combine capacity operations with the option for designated monthly rental areas. It was the Authority's intention to launch the hybrid system at Braddock Autopark due to its continuous lack of space availability for covered monthly parking and for hourly parking, especially during special events. Helm explained the proposed hybrid system setup for Braddock Autopark as follows:

1. Non reserved monthly parking option: This option would allow the monthly parker access to parking anywhere within the garage with the exception of designated reserved areas. The fee would be set at a standard base rate.
2. Business block monthly parking option: This option would allow the monthly parker access to parking within a designated reserved area of the garage during a specified business hour restriction as yet to be determined. After business hours, renter would be allowed access in the facility. The fee would be set at a premium rate due to expected enforcement of and marking of area.

3. 24/7 or resident section monthly parking option: This option would allow the monthly parker access to parking within a designated reserved area on a 24/7 basis. The fee would be set at a premium rate due to expected enforcement of and marking of area.
4. Hourly parking access would be allowed anywhere within the garage except for designated reserved areas. Due to automation of garages, it has been determined that hourly parking restrictions for the ground level only of the garages has not been effective.

Thoughts, questions, and concerns expressed by attendees were as follows:

- What would the protocol and consequence be if a vehicle that is not authorized parks within one of the designated reserved areas? Suggestion was made for the Authority to put an additional gate system at the monthly parking area to prohibit hourly parking use.
 - Helm's response: The Authority plans to address adding an additional gate system to cordon off the monthly parking section or level. It is estimated that the gate system may cost \$100,000 and could be too costly for the Authority to purchase and install at this time. Enforcement measures are to include aggressive signage and the issuing of ticket violations when necessary. The Authority also plans to inquire about using the booting system as a means of enforcement.
- Will the hybrid system of operations be implemented at all the garages or just at Braddock Autopark only?
 - Helm's response: The Authority's challenge with space enforcement is that it no longer has staff in place to monitor garages due to the automation of the facilities. This does pose an additional challenge when addressing the demand for parking at Braddock Autopark; therefore it was the Authority's idea to implement the system at Braddock Autopark first and monitor how well it performs. If the system improves overall operations and functions appropriately, it will be subsequently implemented at the other garages.
- Would the Authority consider signage directing hourly customers to use the other garages? This may assist in alleviating the high demand for use at Braddock Autopark and the problems hourly parking demands create. Suggestion was made to direct all hourly parkers to use the other remaining garages. This practice may curtail the need for the hybrid system.
 - Helm's response: The parking committee has addressed this issue. The Authority is aware that additional signage would be helpful and is currently working on signage improvements. It is the Authority's responsibility to provide parking to everyone at each garage. It would not be appropriate to deny hourly parking access in Braddock Autopark and the Authority is not able to force customers to use the other

garages. Helm extended the invitation to attend the regular WPA meetings held each month for further comments or discussions on this subject.

- Currently how many rental spaces are available at Braddock Autopark?
 - Helm and Anderson's response: There are approximately 60 spaces available on the roof for rent. Undercover spaces are not available for rent at this time.
- Would it be possible for the Authority to offer monthly parking on the roof free of charge to businesses that currently use undercover parking?
 - Helm's response: There is no such thing as free parking. The Authority's charter states that parking is to be provided to the public for a fee. Burke added that abuses would occur and it would be too difficult to monitor who is parking where in the garage. Incidents continue to occur where roof parkers have been using the ground level for parking.
- Why should the rental rate be so expensive if a monthly parker paid for their parking on a yearly basis? Shouldn't the Authority offer a discounted rate since the Authority received the money in advance?
 - Helm's response: The monthly renter does have less expensive options available to them. The basis for charging a premium rate for a designated reserved parking area is that the Authority would be required to mark the space accordingly and provide additional monitoring and enforcement of that area. Burke added that if the customer pays for their rental parking contract in advance, upon cancelling the customer would be refunded for the months not used accordingly.
- Not everyone works the same specific hours on a daily basis.
 - Helm's response: It would not be feasible for the Authority to continually change the business block every month in order to accommodate various unpredictable changes in a monthly renter's work schedule. Reasonable discipline would be required.
- Helm asked the attendee's if the hybrid system would be a reasonable plan for serving everyone's parking needs. The attendees stated that it appeared there were not enough spaces within Braddock Autopark to accommodate the parking needs for downtown. Helm explained that the hybrid system would allow for total utilization of all the spaces within the garage. The Authority is aware that the demand for hourly parking has compromised the effectiveness of guarantying the monthly parkers their particular spaces on a regular basis. The hybrid system plan would utilize all spaces that are open inside the garage for hourly parking use as needed and guarantee the monthly parker

their space at all times. The hybrid system also provides a variety of options for monthly parking from which the customer can choose what would best meet their parking needs. Burke added that this system would allow for monthly parkers to use spaces located undercover and hourly customers would be allowed to park upstairs in spaces that are not being used as well.

- Attendees expressed that many monthly parkers were not comfortable with anyone being allowed to park beside their cars. Many monthly parkers are comfortable with knowing exactly who is parking beside them at all times.
- It was expressed that the Authority appeared to have an inventory issue with providing enough spaces to accommodate the daily demands for parking particularly in the area where Braddock Autopark is located. This issue is aggravated by the City's continued improvement to downtown which is in turn attracting the public to the downtown area. The City is helping to create the problem for the Authority to be able to continue to provide available parking at a reasonable price and not providing any assistance for a solution. It appears the Authority in its attempt to alleviate the situation is price gouging the monthly parking customers and not the hourly parking customers. It was suggested that the Authority use pricing as a way to push the inventory demand for parking from Braddock Autopark to the other 3 garages.
 - Helm's response: It would be discriminatory to force customers to park only in certain places or garages and that is the reason the Authority would not entertain such an idea as using pricing as a way to forcibly push customers to use other garages. Helm stated that the Authority is obtaining revenues well below its projections for sustainability. The Authority has not increased rental rates in 3 years therefore it is unreasonable to suggest that it is price gouging any of its customers. The Authority's financial information is open for the public to review at any time should there be a question of the Authority's integrity.
- The hybrid system appears to be very complicated. Would it be possible for the Authority to stencil monthly parking spaces as a means to direct hourly parkers as to where they are allowed and not allowed to park? This would be an inexpensive and uncomplicated solution for space management.
 - Helm's response: The Authority cannot guarantee that hourly customers would adhere to signs.
- Should towing of hourly parkers in monthly spaces be enforced in the garage? The problem of customers parking in the wrong spaces increased when the Authority implemented automation of the garages and removed the booth attendants that were on duty. Administrative costs could be added for towing and used to reimburse the monthly parker who was inconvenienced by the hourly parker's use of their space. Using ticket violations and fines for enforcement only benefits the Authority as they get to keep the revenues generated from this, it does not benefit the monthly parker who was directly affected by the experience.

- Helm's response: The Authority does understand that signage and enforcement needs continued improvement.
- Where is parking provided for the tenants of the new Taylor Hotel apartments?
 - Helm's response: The Authority does not have a standing agreement in providing parking with the use of preferential treatment for the apartment tenants.
- Has the Authority asked for feedback from all its customers as to if they wanted the hybrid system or capacity operations to be implemented? If so why was everyone not asked for their feedback?
 - Burke's response: Anderson and she spoke with large user groups, primarily businesses that currently rent spaces in the garage. The overall consensus was that customers were not enthusiastic about total capacity operations however; customers were willing to compromise and allow their spaces to be enforced for only a certain time of the day. The Authority apologized to anyone who may have been overlooked at that time and asked that they please email Anderson with their questions or comments.
- Helm asked the attendees if they would be willing to place a type of identifiable marking on their vehicle such as a placard or sticker to indicate their status of being a monthly parker as a means to assist the Authority with enforcement measures. Attendees expressed that they would be in agreement and comply with an identification sticker or placard as a means to assist the Authority with enforcement of their spaces.
- It was stated that during events, monthly parkers usually have their spaces taken from them for use as additional parking for the event. This practice would appear to be a form of double dipping since the Authority has collected revenue from the monthly parker and is also collecting revenue from the hourly parker for use of the same space during that time. Monthly parkers should not be required to pay for their space if it is not available to them at all times.
 - Helm's response: The only time the Authority requires use of a monthly rental space for an event is during Apple Blossom. This exception is stated in the monthly rental agreement that the customer must sign when they rent a space.
- Suggestion was made by attendees to stencil monthly parking spaces first before implementing the hybrid system.
 - Helm's response: This would not solve the ongoing problem of monthly renters using the ground floor while their second floor rental

space is being held open for them. This results in one individual taking up two spaces in a garage that needs space availability due to the high demand for parking.

- Will monthly parkers lose their current designated space after construction at the garage is completed?
 - Helm's response: This will be addressed at the next scheduled meeting. A decision will be made at that time.
- Suggestion was made that the business block reserved parking have a designated time frame of 7 am to 7 pm.
 - Burke's response: Even though a time frame will need to be set for enforcement purposes, once the monthly parker is parked in the space you can remain there as long as you wish. The time frame will be used as a means with which the WPA can use the spaces within that block outside of the designated time frame providing that the monthly parker is not occupying the space.

Helm thanked the attendees for their participation at this meeting. Helm also thanked the attendees for their patience at this time and for their continued patronage.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:52 a.m. The next meeting of the Winchester Parking Authority is scheduled for Thursday July 24, 2014 at 7:30 a.m. in the Conference Room at the Winchester Parking Authority Main Office located in the George Washington Autopark.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa Couch
Secretary

Minutes Approved: Teresa Couch